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IN ITS FIRST 10 YEARS, MOVEMBER HAS RAISED MILLIONS OF DOLLARS FOR PROSTATE- AND TESTICULAR-CANCER RESEARCH PAGE 18

Own up, face justice, Snowden told

NSA whistleblower writes in letter, 'speaking the truth is not a crime'; the White House disagrees PAGE 8

Bitstrips lets you do away with words

Canadian avatar-making comic app is capturing the imagination of Facebook users around the world PAGE 14

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COUPLAND TEMPS AT METRO

Renowned Canadian author Douglas Coupland, second from right, is publishing an exclusive 20-chapter fiction story, TEMP, in Metro each weekday, starting today, until Nov. 29. The series is focused on a character that could one day be you, Metro reader. The author, who popularized the term "Generation X," worked with editors at Metro's head office on the collaboration. From left: Melita Kuburas, Quin Parker, Amber Shortt, Fernando Carneiro, Lacy Atalick, Coupland and Mark Charles. Turn to pages 3 and 12 for more. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

Fracking foes take fight to Clark's home

LNG. Activists erect mock rig on premier's lawn

Opponents of the British Columbia government's liquefied-natural-gas plans set up a three-metre mock fracking rig on Premier Christy Clark's front lawn on Sunday, as she prepares for a trade mission to Asia to sell the province's LNG potential.

A small group from Rising Tide Vancouver Coast Salish Territories set up the mock rig and promised more protests to come as the provincial government is set to pursue a massive expansion of the LNG industry.

Maryam Adrangi, of the Council of Canadians, said there are already 23,000-plus fracking wells in operation in northern B.C.

"With Christy Clark touring North America to promote liquefied natural gas, fracking and gas extraction is set to take over the province," Adrangi said in a statement.

Opponents of shale gas extraction say the method of injecting high-pressure water into the ground to shatter rock and release the gas contaminates drinking water and causes other environmental problems, including increased greenhouse gas emissions and earthquakes.

"No one should have to face the impacts of fracking, which include having all of their freshwater being used by industry and for corporate profit and then having unidentified, toxic chemicals put back into the water cycle," Adrangi said.

But proponents of the industry — including Clark — say it's an industry with multibillion-dollar potential that could change the face of B.C.

Natural Gas Development Minister Rich Coleman just returned from a trip to Asia, saying final investment decisions are expected on several projects in the next year.

Clark will undertake her own trade mission to the region this month with the aim of furthering the province's LNG prospects. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Letter from the editor

Young, smart and living in an uncertain world

CHARLOTTE EMPEY
Editor-in-Chief

You know the Metro mindset: we're smart, quirky rule breakers and über disrupters. So you won't be surprised — but we do hope you'll be excited — about an exclusive collaboration with celebrated Canadian author Douglas Coupland.

TEMP, serialized fiction running in Metro each weekday from today to Nov. 29, explores what it means to be young, smart and only temporarily employed through the eyes of a contemporary cast of characters just trying to carve a place for themselves in an uncertain world.

Temp opens with: "Greetings. My name is Shannon. I'm a temp, but more than that, I'm the future of employment in the Western world. Sure, you may have a job right now, but one day you'll be me."

When Douglas approached us with his concept for a serialized narrative we jumped on the opportunity for a partnership. Douglas has been described as possibly the most gifted interpreter of North American pop culture writing today — and TEMP more than lives up to his reputation.

When I asked Douglas why Metro, he told me: "Metro is the tom-toms of the global village. It's the new face of old media. It reaches millions of people who devour every word and it all ends up being discussed in lunchrooms, meeting rooms and dinner tables around the world."

And what does TEMP say about Douglas' take on tomorrow?

Read on! The first installment is on page 12.

Like alien eggs inside your brain

In the next four weeks you'll be reading the daily story of a very likeable character named Shannon. You already know Shannon; everyone knows Shannon. You may well be Shannon.

She's that slightly geeky gal who temps at every office you've ever worked at. She's funny, she's got her head screwed on right, and most of all, Shannon lives in our collective real world. She lives in the year 2013, and Shannon's world is changing and mutating as rapidly as yours.

Change: that dreaded word. If only we could have a one-year holiday from change — but that's not going to happen, and we all know it. So then, how do we make the most of life as it's really lived? How do we cope and find the good stuff amidst the bad stuff? That's what Shannon's all about.

Dépêche fiction

A traditional novel will always be central to human civilization, but I get the impression a new form of storytelling is being called for. I call it dépêche fiction: fast-changing fiction.

But wait. Why Metro? And why me writing about a character named Shannon in Metro? Two reasons. One: I always set my books in what I call "the extreme present tense." As living creatures, the present moment is all we have. It truly is … it's freaky and messy and weird. But it's ours and soon enough the present tense will become the Good Old Days — so enjoy it.

Two: I'm no longer sure if fiction is keeping pace with life and how we live it. I'm a born experimenter and I want to try something new to address this lack. I've said it before, and I'll say it again: as a species, we've never been smarter, yet we've never felt more stupid. We live in a world of devices and clouds and economic bubbles.

A traditional novel will always be central to human civilization, but I get the impression a new form of storytelling is being called for. I call it dépêche fiction: fast-changing fiction. (Yes, kind of like Depeche Mode, a band I totally like.) Dépêche fiction is a cappuccino hit. Dépêche fiction is a really awesome Russian dash-cam clip. Dépêche fiction is written so that it accumulates in your brain over time and then, just like alien eggs, it suddenly hatches and makes your brain say, "Hey! I'm feeling something tingly and new! And BTW, I've overtaken your existence!"

What to expect? Well, it's not The Office, and it's not a comic strip. TEMP is something new — and you get to be a part of the experiment. And Metro is the perfect slot for TEMP. Metro is read by people who are out there in the world living a full-on modern experience. Fiction is about readers being able to say, "Wait — that's how I see the world!" And I hope that's what you feel. And now let the eggs hatch.

DOUGLAS COUPLAND

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‘Too risky’: Goodbye tenant insurance, hello roommates

Vancouver rental woes. Engineer called more than 30 national, local companies to find coverage after moving in with three friends

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

Moving in with a couple of roommates to save cash can mean waving goodbye to more than just personal space — home insurance will likely be out the window, too.

Nearly all insurance companies refuse to provide tenant insurance if three or more unrelated people live together because it’s “too risky,” according to Vancouver engineer Hiran Perera, who called more than 30 national and local companies last week to try to find coverage after moving in with three friends, all professionals in their mid-twenties.

Metro contacted several insurance companies and got the same response. Perera finally found one company that would agree to insure them, but at $80 per month per roommate the price was drastically higher than the $12 he paid when he lived alone. The common policy is yet another barrier to finding affordable housing in the city and it hurts people trying to cut costs in the first place, the 28-year-old said.

“There’s a reason people are moving in together — to save money,” he said, noting the situation is particularly bad in Vancouver’s market. “If something happens to those people, and they don’t have insurance, they’re the worst off.”

Perera has always bought insurance for peace of mind, especially after hearing horror stories from friends whose homes were ravaged by theft or fire. He has a good job but would not be able to foot the bill if he lost everything.

“Insurance should be something that’s available to everybody,” Perera said. “It shouldn’t be at a stage where it’s at a price point that’s not affordable for the common person.”

One of Vancouver city council’s top priorities is affordable housing, but Coun. Kerry Jang said there isn’t much the city can do about insurance. (Nor can the Canadian Council of Insurance Regulators force companies to insure people.)

“The only thing the city can do is help create more rental properties,” Jang said, pointing to the 1,500 new dedicated rentals being build across the city.

Roommates Addison Boyer, 26, and Hiran Perera, 28, in front of their home near Commercial-Broadway. They moved in with two other roommates to save cash, but now they can’t buy tenant insurance because the risk is apparently too high. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Queen of Nanaimo out of service after high winds damage ferry

The ferry Queen of Nanaimo sits in shallow water on Saturday at Village Bay, B.C., after the vessel ran aground, damaging the terminal dock.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

High winds pushed BC Ferries’ Queen of Nanaimo vessel out of position, causing it to hit a float, damaging the ship and shutting down all sailings between Tsawwassen and the Gulf Islands since Saturday.

BC Ferries confirmed damage has been done to the starboard aft side of the ferry and there will be no service from Tsawwassen to the Gulf Islands for at least another week.

Following a full underwater inspection of the ship Saturday night, damage was found to the propeller and shafting as well as some parts of the hull.

Ferries’ spokeswoman Debra Marshall said the Queen of Nanaimo was carrying 22 crew members and two passengers at the time, but when the ferry backed out of port it struck a private float.

“What the captain and crew did was they followed our emergency procedures and they deployed both the anchors, and that was to keep the ship from being set on to shore,” Marshall said.

The ferry has since been put on to a dry dock for repairs.

“BC Ferries is treating this with the utmost priority to make arrangements to secure a dry-dock to make the necessary repairs and return the vessel to operational service as soon as possible,” a media release states.

Meanwhile, all scheduled sailings between Tsawwassen and the Southern Gulf Islands were cancelled until further notice. Service to all Southern Gulf Islands destinations was instead being provided through Swartz Bay.

BC Ferries says a full investigation is underway to determine the root cause and events leading up to the incident and the sustained damage.

SAM SMITH/FOR METRO/WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

Barricaded with teen: Cops

Police arrest intoxicated man with hatchet in Port Alberni

Police forced their way into a Port Alberni home Friday night to arrest an intoxicated, hatchet-wielding 38-year-old man who had barricaded himself inside with a 15-year-old girl.

Police responded to a 911 call reporting an intoxicated man causing problems around 7 p.m., according to a news release from Port Alberni RCMP.

When police arrived at his residence, the man would not co-operate, became confrontational, barricaded himself inside the home with the teenager and began damaging property with a hatchet.

An aggressive large-breed dog also charged at the officers, prompting one officer to fire multiple shots toward the dog, causing it to flee. (The dog has since been located.)

After repeated failed attempts to de-escalate the situation, an emergency response team was called nearly seven hours later to enter the home and arrest the man.

The girl was found unharmed. Child and Family Services is now involved.

Police have since executed a search warrant at the home and seized weapons in relation to this investigation.

The man was expected to appear in court Saturday.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

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Cathedral Grove threatened by nearby logging: Conservationist

Collateral damage.
Environmental groups want project halted for further discussion

Canada's oldest and most-renowned forest is facing new threats as logging on a nearby mountain opens the way for collateral damage to Cathedral Grove on Vancouver Island, local conservationists say.

Island Timberlands, based in Nanaimo, is in the midst of clearing a road to a plot of Douglas fir trees on the southwest-facing slope of Mount Horne, a plot of land estimated to be about 40 hectares.

While the land itself is not part of Cathedral Grove, Ken Wu, executive director of the Ancient Forest Alliance, said once the logging is finished Cathedral Grove will feel the after effects.

Ancient Forest Alliance campaigner Jane Morden speaks at a press conference in the Cathedral Grove old-growth forest over the weekend. COURTESY TJ WATT

"They're not going to log the park itself, but the park is damaged by the activities around its edges," he said. "Basically these protected areas become islands of extinction."

According to Wu, logging of Douglas fir trees on Mount Horne will destroy the winter habitat of black-tailed deer, pollute the Cameron River, which runs through Cathedral Grove and feeds the local wildlife and plant life, from siltation, and destroy part of the Mount Horne Loop Trail, a popular hiking and mushroom-picking area.

"Island Timberlands needs to back off and the government needs to fix the problem, because they broke it," Wu said.

The B.C. government once protected these lands, but in 2004 they were deregulated, thereby removing the old-growth, riparian, scenic, wildlife and endangered species habitat protections and the restrictions on raw log exports on those lands.

Wu and many other local conservation groups held a protest two weeks ago to raise awareness of the issue, but logging is still commencing.

"The company needs to hold off until the government can remedy the situation either with land-purchase or regulation," Wu said.

Port Alberni Watershed-Forest Alliance spokeswoman Jane Morden met with Island Timberlands on Oct. 19, but could reach no agreement to halt logging for further discussion.

SAM SMITH/FOR METRO

Iconic tailor shop turns 100

One hundred years of creating style, flair and a business that powered through despair: Chinatown's Modernize Tailors has been through it all, tailoring suits for the likes of Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sean Connery, Sylvester Stallone and more.

To mark the centenary, council member Kerry Jang and dozens of others descended on Dr. Sun Yat-Sen's Classical Chinese Garden on Sunday to honour the last remaining tailor of Modernize Tailors, Bill Wong.

Wong, 91, sat gleefully with his wife Zoe in front of a podium inside the gardens, where members of the community and his family recounted the birth of the shop to its survival and continued success.

"The Wong family is very much, their history is very much, the history of Vancouver and very much a history of many Chinese families that have immigrated," said Coun. Jang.

Jang ended his speech by presenting Wong with a plaque and an official certificate from the City of Vancouver proclaiming Nov. 3, 2013, as Modernize Tailors Day.

Wong has no plans to stop tailoring because, he says, "My hands, eyes and legs are still in good shape. I can still see the width of the thread."

Modernize Tailors' Bill Wong METRO

SAM SMITH/FOR METRO

Delta

Pilot injured in small-plane crash

A pilot was taken to hospital Sunday after his home-built Zodiac plane crashed during take-off at the Delta Heritage Airpark.

Delta Police say the plane experienced unknown difficulties and touched down, before lifting off again and crash landing in a weedy area.

The 38-year-old pilot was the only occupant.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Health care

Lake orders Fraser Health review

British Columbia's health minister has ordered a review of Fraser Health.

Terry Lake said funding for the authority has increased by six per cent over three years, compared to 4.8 per cent at other health authorities, yet it failed to manage its budget.

"The increases they've received have … outpaced the population growth," Lake said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Eastside gangs

Raids target cocaine sales

Vancouver police raided four locations in the city's downtown core Friday, as they try to shatter an organized crime group they believe supplies cocaine to the Downtown Eastside.

Insp. Mike Serr says the raids are part of an investigation by the department's organized crime section. He hasn't identified the gangs targeted by the morning raids. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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‘No clemency’ for Snowden: Officials

A ‘terrible idea.’ The NSA analyst-turned-whistleblower made the plea in a letter saying ‘speaking the truth is not a crime’

The White House and the leaders of the intelligence committees in Congress are rejecting National Security Agency-contractor Edward Snowden’s plea for clemency.

“Mr. Snowden violated U.S. law,” White House adviser Dan Pfeiffer said Sunday about the former systems-analyst-turned-fugitive who has temporary asylum in Russia.

“He should return to the U.S. and face justice,” Pfeiffer said, adding when pressed that no offers for clemency were being discussed.

Snowden made the plea in a letter given to a German politician and released Friday. In his one-page typed letter, he asks for clemency for charges over allegedly leaking classified information about the NSA to the media. “Speaking the truth is not a crime,” Snowden wrote.

Snowden’s revelations have led to calls by allies to cease such spying, and moves by Congress to overhaul U.S. surveillance laws and curb the agency’s powers.

But the head of the Senate Intelligence Committee said if Snowden had been a true whistleblower, he could have reported it to her committee privately.

“That didn’t happen, and now he’s done this enormous disservice to our country,” said Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein. “I think the answer is no clemency.”

The chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, Rep. Mike Rogers, called clemency for Snowden a “terrible idea.”

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this image made in September, Edward Snowden takes a boat trip on the Moscow River. LIFENEWS/ROSSIYA 24/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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LAX shooting. Suspect says he had no help except ride to the airport

The 23-year-old gunman charged in a deadly shooting at Los Angeles International Airport told authorities at the scene that he acted alone and had been dropped off at the airport by a friend, a law enforcement official who has been briefed on the investigation said Sunday.

Authorities do not believe the friend knew that Paul Ciancia, the man charged in the attack, planned to open fire inside LAX’s Terminal 3 just moments later, killing one Transportation Security Administration officer and wounding four others, said the official, who is not authorized to speak publicly about the investigation and requested anonymity.

Ciancia was dropped off in a black Hyundai and was not a ticketed passenger. He was able to respond to investigators’ questions at the scene Friday, the source said.

Ciancia was shot four times and was under a 24-hour armed guard at the hospital, where he remained heavily sedated, the law enforcement official told The Associated Press.

In court documents and interviews, authorities spelled out a chilling chain of events, saying Ciancia walked into the airport, pulled a .223-calibre assault rifle from his duffel bag and fired repeatedly at point-blank range at 39-year-old TSA officer Gerardo I. Hernandez, killing him.

He then fired on at least two other uniformed TSA employees and an airline passenger, who all were wounded, before airport police shot him as panicked passengers cowered in stores and restaurants, authorities said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Capital offence

Federal prosecutors charged Ciancia on Saturday with murder of a federal officer and committing violence at an international airport. The charges could qualify him for the death penalty.

Wisconsin

2 planes carrying skydivers collide; all jump to safety

Two planes carrying skydivers collided in midair Saturday evening in northwest Wisconsin, but all the parachutists were able to jump free with no major injuries reported.

Mike Robinson, an instructor and safety adviser for Skydive Superior, said he and four others were preparing to jump from a lead plane when a trailing plane hit their craft, causing a fireball and shearing off the craft’s right wing.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chicago

A peek under an escalator reveals a little alligator

A small alligator found under an escalator at Chicago’s O’Hare airport has left authorities puzzled.

A worker discovered the foot-long alligator on Friday, police spokesman Jose Estrada said Sunday. An officer captured the reptile by putting a trash can over it.

“We don’t know where it came from or how long it’d been residing in the airport facilities,” Estrada said. “It’s one of those random incidents.”

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Ford sorry for drunkenness but says he's no drug addict

The show does go on. T.O. mayor says he will explain contents of the video if it's released

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford acknowledged Sunday that he has made mistakes — including being "hammered" in public — but left unanswered questions about the alleged crack video.

"I'm the first one to admit I am not perfect. I have made mistakes," Ford said on his weekly radio show.

"Unfortunately, I cannot change the past; I can just move forward and learn."

Ford apologized to his family, city council and Toronto taxpayers. He said he was referring to being inebriated in public and texting while driving.

Ford didn't discuss the contents of the video that allegedly shows him smoking crack.

"When the video is released, I'm going to explain to the best of my ability what's in the video," said Ford, who asked Police Chief Bill Blair to release it.

But when the scandal first broke in May, Ford insisted there was no video at all.

Ford said later Sunday in an interview that he does not have a drug addiction problem.

"I'm not an addict of any type of drug — even alcohol," he told radio station AM640.

There have been repeated accounts of Ford appearing intoxicated in public. On Sunday he acknowledged getting "hammered" during a street festival last summer.

At the time, Ford downplayed his behaviour, saying in August that he didn't do anything offensive and that videos of him appearing intoxicated were blown out of proportion. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford appears on his NewsTalk 1010 radio show on Sunday. MARK BLINCH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Age of consent

Vatican changes — progress or PR?

While Vatican City amended its criminal code in July to raise the age of consent to 18, has anything really changed?

Previously, the Vatican had the lowest age of consent in Europe — 12 — and a record of child sex-abuse scandals. Pope Francis overhauled the criminal code, in part to comply with international treaties such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Now, sex with a person under the age of 18, prostitution or possession of child porn can be punished by up to 12 years in prison.

Critics say this hasn't changed anything and is a feel-good gesture to help generate positive headlines.

The Vatican also made it a crime to leak information about criminal activity to anyone outside the church — punishable by up to eight years in prison. VAWN HIMMELSBACH/FOR METRO

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Starbucks is expanding its Teavana "tea bars," which currently includes 59 Canadian locations. Our tea consumption is expected to rise 40 per cent by 2020, driven by an interest in health and wellness. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Care for a spot of carbonated tea?

Brewing up change.
Companies such as Starbucks are cashing in on the resurgence of tea, opening cool 'tea bars'

Your grandmother's favourite beverage has found a new life with retailers who say tea is destined to become the next sought-after sip for Canadians bored with the same old cup of coffee.

Whether it's the traditional Earl Grey or fancy variations, like carbonated teas, or tea-infused alcoholic drinks, the number of options for afternoon tea is growing at a stunning pace.

"Like wine, people are engaged by the complexities and the intricacies of tea," said Keith Howlett, an analyst with Desjardins, who watches trends in the retail industry.

"It's a familiar beverage and I think that's opened up possibilities."

During the past few years, more tea shops have established a quiet presence in neighbourhoods across the country, relying primarily on word of mouth to entice new customers, but the buzz is about to become much louder as Starbucks tries to grab a taste of the fervour.

Last month, the Seattle-based coffee chain opened its first "tea bar" in New York City, a symbolic step towards expanding its Teavana store base. The company made the biggest acquisition in its history last year when it spent $620 million US to acquire about 300 Teavana stores, including 59 locations in Canada.

The rollout could find a particularly receptive audience in Canada where tea is the fifth most popular beverage, with nearly 10 billion cups drunk each year, according to Statistics Canada. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Steeped in tradition

"Canada has always been a hot-tea-drinking country because of our British past."
Louise Roberge, president of the Tea Association of Canada, a lobbyist group for the industry

Seller living in Vancouver

EBay apologizes, quickly removes Holocaust items

Online auction site eBay has apologized after a newspaper found apparent Holocaust memorabilia, including the clothes of concentration camp victims, being offered for sale.

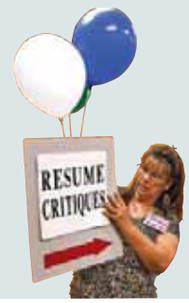
Britain's Mail on Sunday newspaper said items included shoes and a suitcase from concentration camp prisoners, Star of David armbands that Jews were forced to wear and the alleged uniform of a Polish baker who died in Auschwitz. The newspaper identified the seller of the uniform as a Ukranian man who now lives in Vancouver.

EBay said it had removed 30 items from the site. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Random biz fact of the day

5-7 sec.

Recruiters spend an average 5-7 seconds looking at a CV.
BEHIRING/NEXCAREER



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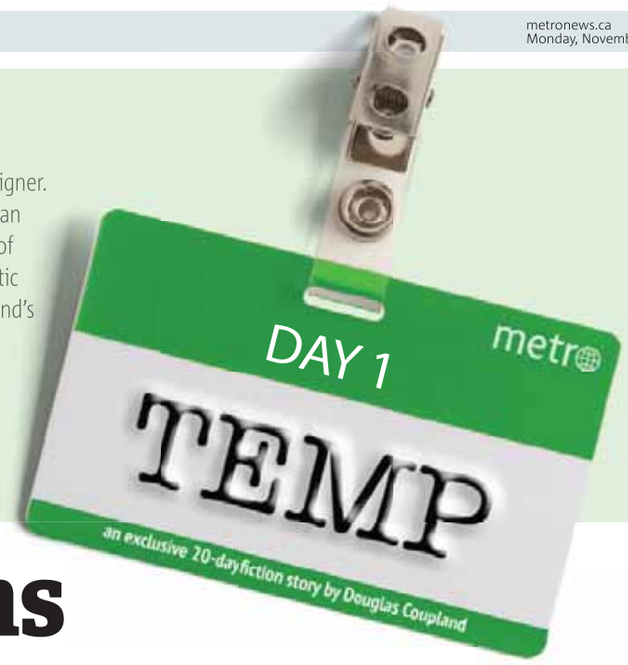
Douglas Coupland

Douglas Coupland is a Canadian novelist, visual artist and designer. His first novel, published in 1991, was Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture. He has published 13 novels, a collection of short stories, seven nonfiction books, and a number of dramatic works and screenplays for film and television. Douglas Coupland's novels and visual work synthesize high and low culture, web technology, religion, and changes in human existence caused by modern technologies.

Douglas Coupland's latest novel, Worst. Person. Ever., is available from Random House Canada.



All work, low pay

Health and dental? Dream on, you part-time workers

The service industry has the highest level of temp jobs that are considered "precarious employment," according to a report called Untapped Potential: Creating a Better Future for Service Workers, by the Institute for Competitiveness & Prosperity and the Martin Prosperity Institute.

Part-time work that pays less than $24,000 a year, "precarious employment," makes it tough to get ahead. Sometimes juggling more than one job, in positions such as cashiers, taxi drivers and health-care aides, few of these routine service workers receive health or dental benefits or have access to retirement pension plans, the report notes. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

GETTY IMAGES

Temp Enlivens Life-Sucking Meeting

I've learned over the years that the fastest way to turn an office to a grinding halt is simply to write 'broken' on a piece of paper, and tape it onto the photocopier. Staffers walk to the machine, see the sign, feel momentarily inconvenienced, and then glow inwardly when they realize they can blamelessly return to their cubicle and play FreeCell and trawl the Internet for Russian dash-cam car accident gifs.

Greetings. My name is Shannon. I'm a temp, but more than that, I'm the future of employment in the Western world. Sure, you may have a job right now, but one day you'll be me, roving from gig to gig, no medical, no dental, no anything else except the pleasure of not having to kiss ass or put up with imbeciles or care much about things like, say, life-suckingly boring meetings of the sort I sit in on at Taylor, Wagner & Kimura Filter Systems. TWK's owners are systematically moving the company to China and everyone knows it. Pretty much once a day someone at TWK is given the axe while I, as temp goddess, casually buff my nails or stalk Facebook looking for unflattering photos of the popular kids I used to go to high school with. There used to be a full-time receptionist but she went on mat leave. So here I am. Temp!

Dan Wagner (the Danimal) who co-owns TWK understands my devil-may-care, low-commitment attitude. Like today when he called me in from the front. "If it's OK, young Shannon here is going to take notes on today's meeting." Dan always winks at me, which is slightly pervy but technically not actionable as harassment.

My name is Shannon. I'm a temp, but more than that, I'm the future of employment in the Western world.

The Three Sarahs roll their eyes when Dan brings me in. Yes, you read that correctly: Sarah from Marketing, Sarah from Ecommerce Strategy and Sarah from Systems. Don't get me going.

So when the meeting invariably turns into an inevitable miasma of fear and crushed dreams Dan will say, "Shannon, give us a lift, why don't you. What's your random fun fact of the day?"

Today's fun fact: "Well, Dan, what country on Earth has the world's lowest age of consent?" This question was just racy enough to ensure that even the Sarahs listened in.

"What country would that be, Shannon?"

"The Vatican. The age of consent there is 12."

Even the Sarahs reacted to that one.

Random fact of the day

Women really are shoeaholics!

- In the Western world, the average man owns 12 pairs of shoes, while the average woman owns 27.

SOURCE: TIME.COM

"Seriously?"

"12?"

Everyone whipped out their gadgets and dog piled onto Wikipedia. "Wait," said Sarah Number Two, "I think it might actually be 14."

"Well," said Dan, "The 13-year-olds over there must certainly be sleeping easy tonight. Shannon, thank you for bringing joy and knowledge to our universe. Phelps, you are good."

I am.

TO BE CONTINUED...

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WHY NOT CHANGE BOOZE LAWS?

URBAN COMPASS

Paul Sullivan
vancouver@metronews.ca

We can't get enough to drink, apparently.

There are already more than 1,400 retail liquor outlets in British Columbia, but if you believe the man reviewing the liquor laws in this province, it's time to sell beer and wine at the supermarket.

The Liberals' John Yap believes the idea is "resoundingly popular," so look for that among other Liberalized libations to come in his report, due Nov. 25.

Right now, I can imagine a chorus of "I'll drink to that" and, really, who can argue with the idea of being able to pick up a bottle of wine or a six-pack of beer at the same time you go grocery shopping?

Well, the people who already run private liquor stores, for one, who are "surprised and angered" at Yap's enthusiasm for increasing the competition.

Then there's the Centre for Addiction Research in Victoria, citing research showing that if you increase the number of places where people can drink, you will increase the number of people who will drink.

That's a safe bet. Just as whenever the government decides to do something, it causes a separate and equal reaction from people who want things to stay just the way they are. The fundamental laws apply.

As someone who had his last drink before beer was brown and Canadian wine was only available in flocks of ducks and geese, I'm aware that times have changed. Back then, buying booze was about as friendly an experience as going through airport security and customs. There were no actual bottles on display; you had to fill out a form and a government bureaucrat handed over your purchase in a plain brown paper wrapper without ever making eye contact.

There were plenty of problem drinkers, regardless of the barriers thrown in their path. And although the Centre for Addiction Research can point to a link between the accessibility of alcohol and the number of problem drinkers, you have to ask if it's fair to penalize the majority. It's the same argument that applies to every controlled substance, from marijuana to the Big Gulp.

We are a nation of cross-border shoppers and we've all been to supermarkets in America where the shelves are stocked with a vast array of beer, wine and the hard stuff, and they even have (gasp!) free samples. Everyone seems to take it pretty much in stride.

In case we've forgotten, antiquated liquor laws aside, B.C. has set the standard for public drunkenness on more than one occasion. Somehow, all those Stanley Cup rioters had no trouble taking on a bigger load than they could handle, even though they couldn't get it at the supermarket.

So fussing about the supermarket is pointless. Supermarkets already sell all kinds of things that are bad for you. Actual food is an increasing rarity.

Why stop now?

metro PHOTO CHALLENGE

Contest winner's ears must have been ringing

COURTESY ALEXANDER WHISTLERS

Capturing a sense is part of the challenge

Alexander Whistlers, of Russia, is one of this year's global grand winners of Metro's Photo Challenge with his submission of the child musician. This year's challenge entailed capturing a sense. Whistlers and another Photo Challenge winner will join sponsor Reach for Change on a life-changing trip to Ghana, West Africa. There they will meet Change leaders — local heroes improving life for children.

The photos taken during the expedition will be published worldwide in Metro. METRO

Listen up

"When you see a real good picture, you can feel it in your stomach. This is the one I felt from the texts in the background to the colour of the boy's face."
Urban Brådhe, contest judge

What else?

Visit metronews.ca for more photo contest submissions.

And check here tomorrow to view the second global winner.

CONTRIBUTED

WE ACT:
CANADA DOES GOOD

Hope Blooms in north-end Halifax

Across the nation in our neighbourhoods, Canadians are up to a whole lot of good. Here's one we'd like you to meet:

Who: Jessie Jollymore (pictured), 54, green-thumbed go-getter
Where: Halifax, N.S.
What: Hope Blooms, a youth-led community garden
Why: "When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change," says Jollymore.

Jollymore saw potential in a trash-filled lot of the public housing project of Uniacke Square. With chicken wire, donated seedlings and a five-hose line connected to a kitchen sink, she mobilized nine youth from the low-income neighbourhood to set up a community garden. Today, the volunteers of Hope Blooms are local leaders and expert farmers, producing more than 2,000 pounds of communal crops annually.

What inspired you to get started? "I felt that if there was something growing that the youth felt was their own, it may change things. We didn't know what we were doing at first. I basically had to search, 'How do you plant things?' But we kept digging until we had over 3,600 square feet and a greenhouse."

What motivates the work you do every day? "These youth were bullied in school, picked on because of where they live. But they changed the way they see themselves — as business people, as change-makers — and people outside the community are changing the way they see the kids.

"There's an old saying that 'it takes a village to raise a child,' but sometimes the children raise the village."

CRAIG AND MARC KIELBURGER

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU: Send us your comments: vancouverletters@metronews.ca

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Fan fic

The Making of Star Wars

By. J. W. Rinzler

Kindle/Books

MIND THE APP
Kris Abel
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"He had an underlying current of sensual hostility," says George Lucas as Harrison Ford whoops and hollers in hearing himself described that way, one of many recently recovered audio and video clips featured in this enhanced ebook that explores the fascinating early days of Star Wars, when Luke was a girl, Han Solo was black, and Obi-Wan was a Japanese Samurai.

Box office

Ender's Game the weekend winner

Ender's Game scored the No. 1 slot at the weekend box office, earning $28 million in its opening weekend and sending Jackass Presents: Bad Grandpa into second place, according to studio estimates Sunday. Paramount's candid-camera comedy starring Johnny Knoxville brought in another $20.5 million in its second weekend.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Need to illustrate your status update?

There's an app for that. When words aren't enough, Bitstrips supplies toons for your tales

ANDREA PARK
Metro World News in New York

If you've been spending time lately on Facebook (and who among us hasn't), you may have noticed cartoon versions of your friends popping up on your news feed from an app called Bitstrips. The app was released in 2012, but the company only came out with iPhone and Android updates in September. Now, the personalized comic app is exploding on Facebook, with more than 11 million downloads since its December 2012 launch.

Bitstrips allows you to interact with your friends through social media using comic messages and visual status updates. Here are five things you need to know about the most popular free app on iTunes right now:

1. Bitstrips is Canadian
"We've been completely overwhelmed by the enormous response," said CEO, creative director and co-founder Jacob Blackstock (a.k.a BA). "We're ecstatic that this new way to express yourself online is capturing people's imagination in the way that it has."

Even though Bitstrips first rose to prominence in Canada, the app has taken off around the world, from Europe to Latin America. It's even been adopted by the Ontario school system for use in classrooms across the province.

Metro writer Andrea Park tries out Bitstrips. CONTRIBUTED

Bitstrips has more than 11 million downloads since December 2012. CONTRIBUTED

2. You are the star
You can completely customize your avatar on Bitstrips, from adding in a wheelchair to changing the size of your pupils. You can then add your character into preset Bitstrips scenes; you can share these on Facebook or make greeting cards with them.

3. Your friends can join you in the comic strips
If your friends are on Bitstrips with their own avatars, you can add them into your own comic strips for fun, pre-set scenarios like, "Jane finally bores John to death," with a comic of John leaving on a stretcher while Jane chats away.

4. You need to have Facebook to use Bitstrips
Like it or not, if you want to use Bitstrips you have to be game for letting the app post your comics on Facebook. You can change the privacy settings of your Bitstrips so your Facebook friends don't see them, but they do get sent to your profile. The strips are meant to be used in lieu of a Facebook status or wall post, like, "John is excited to be going on vacation."

5. You can change the Bitstrips scenes
While the background and positioning of the avatars will stay the same in given Bitstrips scenes, you can change facial expressions and text to make the strips your own.

For more info, visit bitstrips.com. WITH FILES FROM VAWN HIMMELSBACH

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Aziz Ansari muses on marriage, babies and getting Buried Alive

Comedy. The Parks and Recreation star laments how texting has changed the dating game on his new Netflix special

Beneath the wisecracks and snarky jabs, comic Aziz Ansari admits he's a romantic at heart. The baby-faced stand-up star says he's fascinated by how we connect with each other in this era of texting and Instagram, but especially so when it comes to love.

Finding that special someone is the focus of his new Netflix special Buried Alive, where he muses on the increasing pressures he feels to settle down, raise a family and, well, grow up.

"I'm not like totally consumed by it, thinking about it all the time, but it is kind of interesting," Ansari says of feeling the clock ticking now that he's 30.

"You start getting old and you don't even realize it. It's like, 'People my age are popping kids out! That's pretty crazy.'"

During a recent stop in Toronto, Ansari says he wrote this material while watching a lot of his friends get married and have kids, bringing into sharp focus his own impending adulthood.

Filmed live at the Merriam Theater in Philadelphia, Buried Alive features Ansari musing on marriage proposals, raising children, arranged marriage, and the whole terrifying notion of till-death-do-us-part. It's a markedly more mature look at life than his other comedy specials Intimate Moments for a Sensual Evening and Dangerously Delicious, he agrees, noting that it's part of his own conscious evolution as a writer.

"My favourite musicians and artists are ones that change and evolve over the course of their albums," says the Parks and Recreation co-star, who filmed and paid for the special himself to be sure he had complete control over the final product.

"I hate it and I think all artists hate it when people are like, 'Oh, well, this is what that guy does.' You know, 'That's his thing,' whatever it is — talking about my cousin Harris or you know (cocky alter ego) Randy, or whatever — and I like all that stuff but you don't want to repeat yourself. I was like, 'Let me do something different and not do any of the stuff I've done in the past.'"

Ansari bemoans the radical ways technology has changed how people communicate, especially the simple act of dating.

"It used to be you'd have to work up courage and call someone on the phone and speak to them and, you know, it was a much different thing than just like (pretends to text on a phone): 'Hey, what are you doing tonight?'" THE CANADIAN PRESS

Aziz Ansari's new stand-up special, Buried Alive, is available on Netflix.
CONTRIBUTED

Other ventures

Stretching himself in new directions includes embarking on an ambitious multimillion-dollar book deal for Penguin Press.

- **Writing.** The book will investigate modern single life and how today's relationships have been affected by technology. Ansari says he plans to interview academics and conduct his own research.

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

The sky's the limit for Kanye's wedding

STARGAZING
Malene Arpe
scene@metronews.ca

Kanye West says he wants fighter jets at his and Kim's wedding. Not because he wants to be overly ostentatious but because it's pretty much the only way to keep Kris Jenner from selling off the rented flatware.

Keith Urban says that he and his wife, Nicole Kidman, sext each other about once a year. No one dares ask what they do every five years.

The actress who played Pippi Longstocking in a 1988 movie is now stripping in Las Vegas alongside Joslyn James, one of Tiger Woods' many mistresses. See, Jon Gosselin, there is always hope.

Kim Kardashian shares that, after the birth of her baby, "when I came back from the hospital the first thing I did was go and look at my vagina in the mirror. It looks better looking than before." #priorities #eeeek #heyhowyoudoing.

Tori Spelling describes Katie Holmes as a "plastic robot" who "can't sing." "You're super-mean, Tori, and it's not my fault," says Katie Holmes. "Tommy insisted he get custody of the music programming."

Miley Cyrus's 13-year-old sister Noah is photographed while she's driving a car. "I know. That was a terrible judgment on my part," says Billy Ray. "What parent in their right mind would let their daughter get photographed clothed?"

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Housework

It's all fun and games — and your house ends up clean

Are you finding it hard to get any amount of housework done with your busy toddler?

Give yourself twice (or three times) as long to do a normal task — like vacuuming or mopping — and try to turn it into a game where your toddler can help you.

Strap him on your back and let him push the vacuum with you. Let him help you "wring out" the mop. Let him dry dishes.

Sure, you might make more of a mess along the way, but he'll enjoy being your sidekick, and your house will at least be cleanish.

JEN WARMAN OF YUMMYMUMMYCLUB.CA

Trying to get things done around the house with a toddler can be a challenge, unless you involve him or her. ISTOCK

Exclusively online

Hannah Montana what have you done?! Find out why Miley means Mommy needs a cocktail with hilarious Metro content from Lyranda Martin Evans and Fiona Stevenson, authors of the bestselling book Reasons Mommy Drinks, at metronews.ca/voices

The gift of not giving a thing

A new approach. One mom shares why she doesn't want any more presents for her kids

CHRISTELLA MORRIS
YummyMummyClub.ca

We're pretty lucky in our family. In May alone, I can cross off three out of four birthdays! Christmas and the fourth birthday are taken care of in December. This makes for a lot less time worrying about buying presents and a lot more time thinking about how much stuff we have. I really can't imagine having more things in my house. Toys, clothes, sippy cups, dirty dishes — we've got so much already.

I don't want to sound ungrateful for the amazing generosity of our friends and family because we're beyond thankful for all they've given us. But it's just so much. My boys really do not need another thing.

My favourite thing about presents is giving them. I spend extra time and care when giving so I know how difficult it can be to find that perfect gift.

But what if nobody gave my boys presents anymore? What if they only gave them gifts? The gifts of experience, adventure, and, more importantly, familiarity that they truly need.

So, before the start of the holiday season, I'm beginning a new tradition by asking that our friends and family offer experiences and time with our boys instead of money spent on them. Instead of buying my boys a toy lion, why not take one (or both) of them to the zoo to see a real one? Spending some time with a family member or friend would mean so much more to them than another toy.

Not a lot of time to give? What about contributing toward one of the shockingly expensive activities the boys participate in — piano, drum, guitar, swimming, dance lessons or soccer?

Don't have a lot of money? Hey, neither do we! No biggie. How about just spending some quality time with the boys? Set a day and take them to the park. Take one of them on a bike ride. Take one to the movies. Instead of investing in their toy collections, invest in your relationship with them.

We have a really good friend who, back in May, couldn't make it to Cash's third birthday party. She said she wanted to drop off a present at another time and I said. "He really doesn't need anything, but we'd love a visit! Why not just take him and do something with him, just the two of you?" In the end she, her boyfriend, and their friend and her daughter went to the zoo with Cash and he loved it.

I always think about the what ifs. What if something happened to me? What if something happened to their dad? They've built strong bonds with some family members, but others are only seen on occasion and only for short periods of time.

Building relationships now with these family members and friends will only benefit them in the long run if something were to ever happen to us.

These are the things I think about, people. Deep, I know.

But seriously, if you're in our circle of friends or family, please don't buy my kids presents but instead give them the gift of your time and love. That's the only thing they need.

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Giving kids your time is more valuable than presents. ISTOCK

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Start those 'staches: Movember marks 10 years of hairy upper lips

Worldwide campaign.
Annual event contributes millions to research and encourages men to take control of their health

Famous folks with moustaches include, from left, Tom Selleck, Clark Gable, Salvador Dali, Richard Pryor and Ryan Gosling. GETTY IMAGES

November celebrates its 10th anniversary this fall. That's a decade spent raising funds for and awareness of prostate and testicular cancer, along with highlighting men's health in general. Since its beginnings in Australia, this annual campaign has become the world's largest non-government-funded organization donating to prostate cancer research.

"Last year, we eclipsed our goal of one million participants worldwide and raised over $147 million," says Mark Hedstrom, a spokesman for the annual fundraiser.

Movember is a simple, fun effort that works like this: Participants register online and sign up sponsors.

Then, on Nov. 1, the Movember men shave their faces clean and for the rest of the month grow a moustache. In Australia, the nickname for a moustache is a mo.

Despite the millions Movember puts into research, Hedstrom says an equally important goal of the campaign is having men take control of their health.

"We want men to think November, then November, and then think about getting a health check and telling other men to get a check up," says Hedstrom.

Go to ca.movember.com, hit Sign Up, and fill out your deets. It takes mere minutes to create a Mo Space page, where you can upload a profile photo, invite friends to register and donate, and set your personal URL you can send around. Join a team.

METRO AND NEIL MORTON/FOR METRO

Facts you need to know about prostate cancer

- Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in Canadian men and the second-largest cause of male cancer deaths in Canada.
- Each year around 23,600 new cases are diagnosed in Canada and close to 3,900 Canadian men die of the disease every year.
- One in seven men will develop prostate cancer during his lifetime and one in 28 will die of it.
- If detected and treated early, there is a 95-per-cent survival rate associated with prostate cancer.
- The death rate has been declining significantly, by almost four per cent per year between 2001 and 2009 due to improved testing for prostate cancer and better treatment options.
- The chance of getting prostate cancer rises quickly after a man reaches age 50.

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Growing my first mo.
I didn't bring sexy back, but I sure felt empowered

Last year, for the first time, I grew a mo' for Movember. I had no idea what it would be like to grow a moustache, but the reaction from friends, family, colleagues and strangers alike was fantastic.

Sure, my mo' looked a bit silly on me, as my wife and two daughters can attest — I didn't exactly bring sexy back — but it was a totally empowering experience.

For those who didn't know why I was growing my mo' (yes, there are still some folks who aren't familiar with Movember) it was a great chance to start a conversation and explain why I was doing it, and what the cause is all about — prostate-cancer awareness and men's mental health.

Participating makes you basically a walking billboard for men's health. Being my first time out, I decided to join a team. There's strength in numbers, and it pushes you to compete with your teammates for donations. It's also neat to see your collective total build up over the month. You can also create your own team, and become a captain. If you decide to grow a mo', don't be shy about asking for donations.

If you're trying it this year or considering, be proud of joining this global movement — the Movember effect. There's no better way to get men talking proactively about their health. NEIL MORTON/FOR METRO

Neil Morton shows off last year's Movember look. COURTESY NEIL MORTON

Men's health

Prostate cancer 101: Symptoms and prevention

What is the prostate?
The walnut-sized prostate is a part of the male reproductive system. It adds nutrients and fluid to sperm, and is located in front of the rectum, right below the bladder.

What is prostate cancer?
Prostate cancer is a disease in which some prostate cells have lost normal control of growth and division. They no longer function as healthy cells.

Signs and symptoms of prostate cancer:
- Difficulty urinating
- Urgent need to urinate
- Frequent urination, especially at nighttime
- Burning or pain when urinating
- Inability to urinate or difficulty starting or stopping urine flow
- Painful ejaculation
- Blood in the urine or semen

Beware silent symptoms
Symptoms are not always present, especially in the early stages of prostate cancer. But if detected and treated early, your chances of survival are greatly increased. It's vital to get screened regularly so that if you do develop prostate cancer, the appropriate treatment can be taken.

Diet and lifestyle
- Men who have a low-fibre, high-fat diet have a higher rate of prostate cancer.
- A high body mass index (BMI) may increase your risk of prostate cancer.
- Being physically active is a good preventative tactic, along with losing weight and eating the right foods. Consuming lycopene (found in tomatoes and tomato products), soy, green tea and cruciferous vegetables (such as broccoli), may help to prevent prostate cancer. METRO

ISTOCK

Bloody Mary isn't just a drink (or a ghost)

Bloody Mary Chicken with Olive-Celery Tapenade

This recipe serves six. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

There's a secret ingredient popping up in a diverse range of recipes.

Fish sauce, traditionally used as a flavour enhancer in Asian cuisine, is being added to dishes such as this Bloody Mary Chicken with Olive-Celery Tapenade.

1. In a zip-close plastic bag, combine the V8, fish sauce, Worcestershire, horseradish and cayenne pepper. Add the chicken, close the bag, squeezing out any air, then refrigerate and allow to marinate for 2 to 6 hours.

2. Meanwhile, prepare the tapenade. In a medium bowl, combine the celery, finely chopped green olives, lemon juice, garlic and peppers. Stir well and allow to sit for at least 1 hour at room temperature for best flavour. This can be prepared ahead and refrigerated, then allowed to come to room temperature before serving.

3. When ready to cook the chicken, heat a grill to high. Remove the chicken from the marinade and grill on well-oiled grates for 3 minutes per side, or until cooked through. Serve topped with the tapenade.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients

- 11.5-oz can V8 vegetable juice
- 3 tbsp fish sauce
- 3 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 3 tbsp prepared horseradish
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 1/2 lbs chicken breast tenders
- 3 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup green olives, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup Peppadew peppers (or other sweet-hot peppers), chopped

Healthy eating

Choose it and lose it

ROSE REISMAN
for more, visit rosereisman.com or follow her on twitter @rosereisman

Coffee and tea just go so well with pastries, but many are loaded with fat and calories.

Starbucks blueberry scone

460 calories/ 22 g fat
Many of us are under the impression that a scone with tea is a light snack. It's actually one third of your calories and fat for the day!

Equivalent

A Starbucks blueberry scone is equal in fat to six Eggo chocolate chip waffles.

Starbucks croissant

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Work to the wise: Don't let the temp be dropped

Part-timer pointers. If you don't want to be permanently pushed from your temporary position, avoid these mistakes

VAWN HIMMELSBACH
life@metronews.ca

Don't make a mess of this pending position. ISTOCK

More companies are turning to temps to help out during busy periods or fill in when an employee is sick or on vacation.

If you're looking for full-time work or a way to supplement your income, temping can be a great option.

But if you want to keep the temp jobs rolling in, here are five things you should avoid on the (temporary) job:

Don't reorganize your co-worker's desk

If you're temping to fill in for someone who's sick or on vacation, there's a good chance you'll be sitting at their desk. While it's okay to wipe cookie crumbs off the keyboard, the person who regularly sits there probably isn't going to appreciate it if you tidy up their workspace or reorganize files on their computer (or leave your own cookie crumbs on their keyboard).

Don't get involved in office politics

If you're temping on a regular basis for the same company, it's easy to get sucked into office politics.

Try your best to avoid gossiping about co-workers and getting involved in office dramas — one of the downsides of being a temp is that you're easily replaceable, so it's not in your best interest to go around burning bridges.

Don't use work time as personal time

It's OK to chat with your co-workers; after all, you're not a robot.

But it's best to avoid compulsively checking Facebook, making personal calls or scanning job sites for full-time employment while you're on the clock — this sends a message to your temporary employer that you're not taking the job seriously.

Don't compromise yourself

While you shouldn't waste your employer's time, you should also value your own. Some temps want to make a good impression by working through their unpaid lunch break or taking on tasks that are outside of the original temping contract.

If you burn out or get sick, you won't be able to keep working — and you don't have benefits or sick days to fall back on.

If you don't take care of yourself, no one else is going to do it for you.

Avoid stirring the pot

One of the downsides of being a temp is that you're easily replaceable, so it's not in your best interest to go around burning bridges.

Don't dress like a slob

- Even if you're not looking to turn a temping job into a full-time position, it's not a good idea to show up for work in a pair of sweats (unless, of course, you're going to spend the day painting).
- Temping can open doors to opportunities you hadn't considered, so it's important to dress for success.

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'Round the world wisdom

Facing adversity? Failure is only information

The severe market crash in October 2008 changed my life. I started running to regain my health, both emotional and physical. Shortly after I took my first steps, I ran the Gobi March in China in June '09, followed by the Atacama Crossing in Chile in '10, and the Sahara Race in Egypt in '11. In this post, I share a lesson about life, learned from the desert.

LESSONS FROM THE DESERT
Stefan Danis
life@metronews.ca

Let the "you won't make its" wash away. ISTOCK

We all experience failure. But do we always learn valuable lessons? Though failure can be harsh, it oftentimes is a gateway to greater success.

In preparing for the Gobi Desert race, my failures occurred early in training. As a first-time runner, my technique was poor and, compounded with a lot of distance running, I got injured fast. In addition to stinging blisters and routinely sore muscles, shin splints were now a reality. Known as a debilitating runner's curse, the injury had my doctor prescribing two months of rest and suggesting I only train in the pool.

Back then, the finish line seemed further away than ever — a race that was over two months before it even began. Acknowledging reality, I accepted failure, but made the decision to reframe it as "just information."

Committing myself to in-pool training, I found myself clasping a floatie alongside the lovely grannies of the early morning aqua-fitness class. Repeatedly watching a video showing proper running technique, I adapted my own method. I relentlessly practised in the pool, where the water's resistance allowed for slow motion running. My failure in training caused me to pause, review, and set a new training approach.

What had seemed impossible then happened. Ironically, my last step out of the water would be followed by my first step in the desert. After not actually running in over two months, and never having run more than half a marathon, I embarked on my first ever marathon.

Failure allowed me to hit reset and alter my technique. As unlikely as it may seem, failure can be the key to unlocking future successes.

STEFAN DANIS IS THE CEO OF NEXCAREER AND MANDRAKE, AND THE AUTHOR OF GOBI RUNNER

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The Canucks surround Zack Kassian, centre, after the big forward's second-period goal in a 4-0 win over the Toronto Maple Leafs on Saturday night at Rogers Arena. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Consistency key for Kassian to bloom

NHL. Big forward shows potential again, but Tortorella still waiting to see top effort on regular basis

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

At the onset of training camp, Canucks coach John Tortorella preached patience with forward Zack Kassian.

He said Kassian would have "every opportunity to be a huge part of this team."

To this point, there have been good moments from Kassian, the 22-year-old from Windsor, Ont., and some unnoticeable moments, as the Canucks continue to search for consistency from someone they believe can work into a power-forward role.

After a tough start, in part because of a five-game suspension to begin the season, Kassian has been showing signs that his game is beginning to mould what the Canucks envision.

He scored once in Saturday's win over the Toronto Maple Leafs, recording his second goal in the last three games.

It was the prototypical goal of a player like Kassian.

He worked his way to the front of the Toronto net, where a player of his six-foot-three, 214-pound frame should be, and buried a quick wrist shot. Just seconds before that, he threw a hit on Maple Leafs centre Dave Bolland, forcing the turnover that led to the goal.

"Much better. Much better," said Tortorella of Kassian on Saturday.

"We spent some time with him. I think when (Kassian), his legs are moving and he's involved physically, other parts of his game falls into place.

"Now, that's great. One game. Now we need the consistency. It's there. It's there in Kas. It's a matter of him stepping outside himself here and doing it again, so hopefully that will help us as we get some balance in our lineup."

The Canucks begin a four-game road trip on Tuesday against the Phoenix Coyotes.

CFL playoffs

Lions facing tough QB decision

Mike Benevides said it once before, and he's now said it again: "Stay tuned."

The B.C. Lions' head coach is referring to the decision of who to name as the starting quarterback for next Sunday's West semifinal against the Saskatchewan Roughriders in Regina.

After weeks of uncertainty and experimentation, two prime candidates of have emerged: Travis Lulay and Buck Pierce.

There are compelling arguments supporting both.

In his last two games, Pierce has not only produced good results with the offence when he's come in, but has been an emotional uplift with the fearless sacrifices of his body, which has taken its share of bone-rattling hits and injuries over his career.

He's also a veteran, with nine years of experience in the CFL, including a trip to the 2011 Grey Cup game with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. He's been there. Done it.

So has Lulay, who won that game with the Leos.

In Friday's season finale against Calgary, Lulay returned to the lineup after missing the previous six games with an injury to his throwing shoulder.

He only began throwing during practice and taking reps last week, but made it into Friday's game for three series late in the first half and managed a completion over 30 yards.

"Based on what I saw, I was pretty darn excited," said Benevides of Lulay.

CAM TUCKER/METRO

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
A financial or business matter demands your attention – not next month but right now. If you have not got it sorted by the time Mercury turns direct next weekend it could cost you.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Offer to meet others halfway today and they will jump at the chance. Be open about what it is you desire and encourage others to be honest about their desires too.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Don't waste time on trivial things or petty vendettas. On the work front especially you have important tasks to complete. Get serious about your ambitions.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
If you are planning on doing something out of the ordinary then you had better be quick about it. By this time next week circumstances will have changed so get it done.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
It should be obvious to you by now that a plan of some sort is not going to amount to much, so junk it and focus on something new. By the end of the week you will be working on something different.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Few things in life are black and white and with Mercury, your ruler, still moving retrograde no doubt the whole world looks gray. Never mind. A week from now everything will be sweetness and light again, so smile!

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Maybe something drastic will happen in your personal life to set you on a new course, or maybe your way of looking at the world will change – either way this will be a week of major developments.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Because Mercury is moving retrograde through your sign be careful not to let your mind fool you. It won't be until the 10th, when Mercury moves in your favour again, that you begin to see clearly.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Usually you are upfront about what you think and feel but for some reason you are reluctant to let others know what's going on in your heart. Maybe it's because you're not fully sure yourself.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Someone is being less than honest and you must make it your business to find out exactly where and why they are trying to trick you.

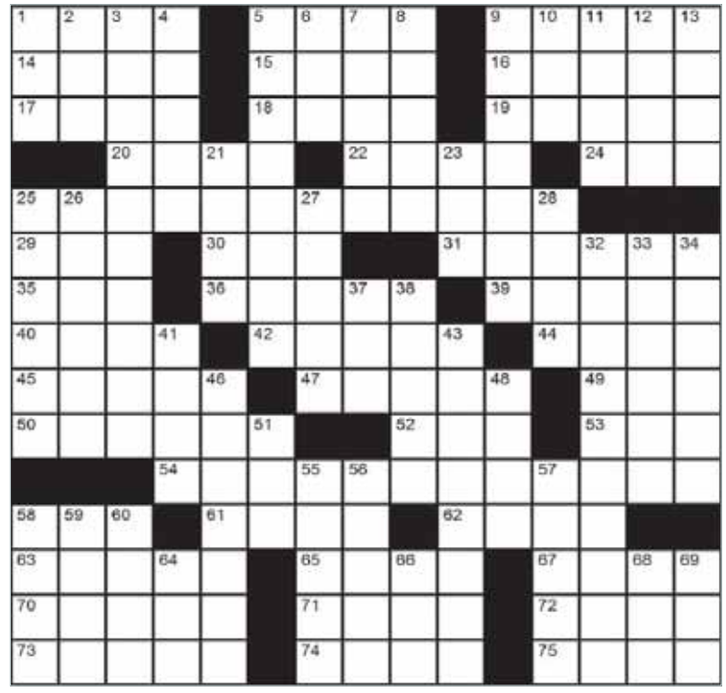
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You want to talk to someone in a position of power but you can sense that now is not the right time, and you are right. A week from now is the right time so be patient.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Try not to let slip facts that rivals might be able to use against you. Pisces is such a trusting sign that you sometimes say more than you should. Think self-preservation. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



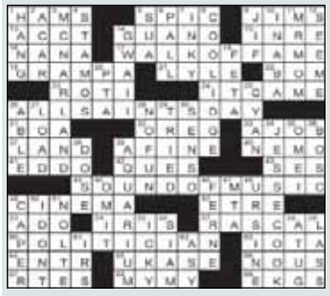
Across

1. Operatic soprano Ms. Gluck
5. Tennis great, Bjorn __
9. Bob or Doug McKenzie
14. Central places
15. Thought
16. Quebec-set flick, "Mon __ Antoine" (1971)
17. Palm starch
18. Sporty stuff
19. Port city of Japan
20. Unfortunately
22. Make supper
24. Internet connection letters
25. The Royal __ Winter Fair, every November in Toronto
29. Ms. Streep, to pals
30. Inflated id
31. St. __, Ontario
35. "__, _ don't know." (Unsure reply)
36. "Bolero" composer
39. Hagar the Horrible's dog
40. Trails
42. Pave the road again
44. Knife part
45. Book drawing, for short
47. Coffee choice
49. "__ Wiedersehen!"
50. Antarctica penguin
52. Tokyo, once
53. Ms. Thompson of Back to the Future (1985)
54. Employee 'gaining work experience' at a company: 2 wds.
58. Assoc.
61. The __ In The Hall
62. Sea of __ (Black Sea arm)
63. Queen's fave dog
65. "Curses!"
67. Biblical peak
70. NHL coach Mr. Vigneault
71. Deodorant's pal
72. Was aware
73. __ _ (Pronounciation-wise, first letter of 'Geneva')
74. __-Dokie
75. Rugged off-road rides, commonly

Down

1. Mr. Pacino's
2. Hawaii's Mauna __
3. Kate & Anna __ (Canadian singer/songwriter sisters)
4. Garlic sauce
5. "If I Had My Way" band from Toronto: 2 wds.
6. Poet's creation
7. Respond
8. Single-named singer from Sherbrooke
9. Pipes like The Caterpillar's in Alice in Wonderland
10. Green light switches
11. Kind of fish
12. Caribou cousins
13. Actual
21. Computer firm
23. Food scrap
25. Aviator Ms. Earhart
26. Actor Mr. McRaney
27. Adored
28. Isolated
32. Team Figure Skating, a new __ __ to debut at the 2014 Winter Olympics
33. Quarrelling one
34. The Vampire Diaries character
37. Pre l'Automne month
38. Straight-__
41. Star Trek role
43. Glow
46. How the Titanic spent its last moments alas
48. Happy Days character, The __
51. Prefix meaning 'Over'
55. Beef up: 2 wds.
56. Singer/actor Chris
57. Toy truck
58. Wood sorrels
59. Chocolate-coated caramel candy
60. Tennis great Steffi
64. "Be off!"
66. Gladiator's 1051
68. Ms. D'Angelo, to pals
69. Painful expressions

Friday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

			5				9	
						2	7	
8			2	1		4		5
9				3			4	
4	7						3	2
	1			9				6
6		4		5	7			8
	8	5						
	9				3			

Friday's Sudoku

7	3	5	8	4	2	9	1	6
9	6	1	7	5	3	4	2	8
4	8	2	9	1	6	5	3	7
6	4	3	5	9	8	1	7	2
8	2	7	4	3	1	6	9	5
1	5	9	6	2	7	8	4	3
2	1	6	3	8	4	7	5	9
5	7	4	2	6	9	3	8	1
3	9	8	1	7	5	2	6	4

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